

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 17

FEBRUARY, 1922

Price 4d.

OUT OF THE RUT

IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES IN BRIEF.

Appropos of our note last month regarding the illustration of Election addresses, we would draw our readers' attention to the effective frontispiece for such an address reproduced on another page. We would congratulate Mr. Summerbell on the enterprise here shown, and point out to prospective election agents at the General Election the striking character of the illustration and the excellent effect upon the individual elector obtained by giving him on the front page of the election address such a pictorial impression of much that the Labour Party stands for. Now is the time when consideration should be given to the form that the election address will take, and candidates and agents should early make up their minds upon the form of their address, while, of course, leaving the matter of it to a later date.

The Maidstone Labour Party have adopted a sensible plan for the collection of individual member's subscriptions. Cards have been printed and bound in books of ten, each card consisting of two tear-offs and a counterfoil. The first tear-off is the membership card which is given to the member on joining. The second tear-off is a notification by the collector of all the particulars concerning a new member, and this portion is filed on the card index plan for reference. We reproduce below this second portion of the card, and its interest lies in the detailed information recorded as to whether the member is a Trade Unionist or a Co-oper, and also of the services he offers to render to the Party. It will be noticed that the illustration given is that of a weekly subscriber, who promises to contribute his subscription at the rate of 2d. weekly or 8s. 8d. per annum. We would make the suggestion that the membership card could have had printed on the back some squares for receiving subscriptions as paid, and

the same might have been done with the counterfoil. This would have obviated the separate use of a collecting book, as we understand is now necessary in the example before us. The system, however, is a business-like one, and Mr. W. H. Hunt, the Local General Secretary, is to be commended on the matter. We note he uses an old corset box for the filing. Some of us have done worse, but it is the triumph over these difficulties that brings out the man, and ultimately makes the big successes.

No. 1.

Name Dick Smith,

Address 1 Railway Terrace,

Stone Street, Maidstone.

(Leave Blank)

Reg. No. S. 153.

(Leave Blank)

Polling District S. Stone St.

T.U.

X

Co-op.

X

17 Jan. 1922

Subscription W £ : : 2d.

Clerical.

X

Canvass.

Collector.

Distribution.

X

Speaker

Chair.

Total ... £ : 8 : 8

This counterfoil to be returned with cash immediately to Secretary.

The collection of individual annual subscriptions is a matter frequently overlooked, or not done in a business-like way. We have observed with pleasure the sensible plan adopted by Agent Langley, at Nuneaton. In this case a powerfully written semi-personal

duplicated letter has been sent to each individual member of the Party through the post (postage 1d.) and at the same time a copy of this letter has been sent to the collectors or secretaries in the various districts, together with a list of the members whose subscriptions are due. All this seems so simple and so elementary, but it is one of the matters which is frequently overlooked and neglected, and we mention the instance under notice, both because of the strength of the letter that was sent, and because it is one of the few complete and efficient plans we have encountered.

A dainty little calendar has come to hand from Mr. Percy Gilkes, the agent at Banbury, and in addition to being a creditable production, a further interest lies in the fact that Mr. Gilkes printed these himself on a hand platen machine. Mr. Gilkes is an ex-printer, and retains some of his plant, and presumably also his Trade Union membership which would place in order his work in the direction indicated. We do not recommend other agents to copy the example, but Mr. Gilkes' exception illustrates an earnest spirit and willingness to render service in all the directions in which he is capable. A printer working at his trade, we presume, incurs no animus with his Union, and we have seen other useful office stationery that Mr. Gilkes has produced, greatly to the added efficiency of his office. Officers who are not so favourably situated, but who, nevertheless, possess a duplicator, might take a lesson in this regard when funds are temporarily low.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

In many constituencies everyone is now busy with elections either for County Councils, Boards of Guardians, or District Councils, or possibly all three. We would commend to electioneers the article on the technicalities of these elections appearing on another page in this issue. To these articles and to the matters that are constantly emphasised in the "Labour Organiser" concerning the fighting of elections, we can add little that is

beneficial to those engaged in the present strenuous contests. There is but one general word of advice that we would give, and it is—attack! Don't be afraid to fight, don't be afraid to hit, and don't be afraid to hit hard and hit every time. No elections were ever won with namby-pamby, half-hearted electioneering, and if the thing is worth doing at all it is worth doing well. Even straitened finance is no excuse for doing little. Experience proves that it is the vigorous fight that is most successful financially. A fight in which everyone wrings their hands and says there is no money will end in there being no money. Instead there will probably be a nasty beating. "Unto him that hath," etc., is true, in another form, of the efforts of local parties in raising money for elections. The greater the effort and the bigger the noise, the more money will come in and the bigger will be the success. Perhaps it is the Parable of the Talents we should have quoted just above, but certain it is that the Party which vigorously uses the resources it has got finds its resources renewed and strengthened quicker and better than could be secured by stingy endeavours and stunted efforts.

Our readers who are fighting in Rural or Urban Council Elections will find it beneficial to refer back to Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7, where we dealt fully with the problems of electioneering at District Council Elections. We are able to supply back copies of Nos. 4 and 5. We have six copies only left of No. 6, but regret we have no copies of No. 7.

Our friends in all these elections are advised to treat the present contests as of absolutely first rate importance in view of the possibility of a General Election following immediately afterwards. In spite of the fact that Labour will score hundreds of fresh successes, and will make a marked advance in its position, the Liberal and Tory Press will join issue on the morrow of our victory to destroy its effect and to create a wrong impression by pointing solely to the number of Labour candidates who are defeated. The moral is to get them all elected and so give the gutter Press some work to do to find a different explanation! It certainly is possible to prevent many defeats by following out promptly advice given from time to time in the "Labour Organiser."

LAW AND PRACTICE

SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED.
BY THE EDITOR.

QUESTION.—“A” is the adopted Labour candidate. He is billed for a public meeting (under auspices of Labour Party) as the prospective candidate. He refrains from advocating his own candidature at the meeting, but speaks for the cause. Does the mere fact of billing him as prospective Labour candidate, cause meeting and adverts. to be election expenses?

ANSWER.—This question is always a rather tricky one, as so many circumstances have to be considered. In my opinion the word “prospective” simply means nothing at all, as a man becomes a candidate the moment he decides to accept an invitation, and that, of course in the Labour Party, is when he is selected. On the other hand a candidate, because he is a candidate, does not necessarily incur expenses in connection with the conduct and management of the election every time he does anything in the constituency. On the bald facts stated, “A” could have been described as the “Labour Candidate,” and he would not then be doing any harm or incurring any expenses in connection with that meeting by speaking as he did. A candidate is perfectly free to speak on a Party platform and he is as free to do this as on a P.S.A. platform, and although at the back of his mind he may be hoping to improve the chances by doing so, yet if judges were to hold that any such action would prejudice his expenses, then the liberty of the poor fellow would be something very minus. While this is clear it is nevertheless not advisable to stretch the point too much, and certainly not at all during an election, though one should always remember that the candidate has his liberty as a citizen as well as his obligations as a candidate. This question was fully dealt with in the “Labour Organiser” for December, 1920, under the heading “When does the Election begin.”

QUESTION.—(1) Can the charabancs of a Co-operative Society, which are licensed for a part of the year and kept for the purpose of letting out for hire, be used during that period, under any circumstances, for the conveyance

of voters to and from the poll at a Parliamentary or Municipal Election?

ANSWER.—(1) Charabancs which are licensed for a part of a year and kept for the purpose of letting out for hire, cannot be used during such period for the purpose of the general conveyance of voters to the poll. They can, however, be hired by individual voters or a number of voters collectively, for the purpose of conveying these and no others, to the poll; while, of course, there is no prohibition against the hire of vehicles for the conveyance of workers for the purpose of other aspects of the election other than the conveyance of voters to the poll.

In the case of a Co-operative Society a very special state of circumstances arises because the vehicles are the property of the members, and I am of the opinion that a Co-operative Society could place its own vehicles at the disposal of its own members for the conveyance of such persons only to the poll. If, however, they went further than this and placed their licensed vehicles solely at the disposal of a particular candidate, there would be great danger of an altogether different use to the one indicated, and I think it would then be held that the use of the vehicles was illegal. The only circumstances under which they could be used would be for the free conveyance of each and any member of the Society, who desired to vote, whomsoever they desired to vote for, and even if the candidate was a Co-operative candidate I think the lending to him of a licensed vehicle would be illegal, because then, the vehicle would not be at the disposal of the owners, but at the disposal of a particular individual or a particular candidate. No candidate could be trusted to supervise the use of such a vehicle in a manner which would insure the free use of same by all members such as alone could justify the use. The danger also of non-members using the vehicle is obvious.

QUESTION. — (2) Can charabancs, which are licensed for a part of the year and kept for the purpose of letting out for hire, be used for the remainder (the unlicensed period) of the year for the conveyance of voters to and from the poll at an election, during which period the charabancs are used for the purpose of trade, as wagons, or lorries?

ANSWER.—(2) The answer to this question rather depends upon the period for which the licenses are taken

out. If a license is taken out and that license covers a whole year, even the fact that the period of use as a licensed vehicle has expired, does not dispose of the fact that it is still licensed. On the other hand I am not sure whether machinery exists for the purpose of surrendering a Hackney license when one desires to use the vehicle purely for the purpose of trade. If such a facility exists then a new state of circumstances arises. The question then, is whether the lenders keep or use the vehicle principally for the purpose of letting out for hire, and this is a particularly difficult thing to divine. I think much would depend upon the circumstances. Thus if a vehicle was kept primarily for the purpose of the summer trade as a charabanc and only converted to trade use when such primary use was unprofitable, then I still think it would be held that the vehicle was "kept and used," "for the purpose of letting out for hire" and the lending of same would be illegal. On the other hand, if the vehicle was primarily a trade vehicle and the Society annually took out a temporary license, it seems to me that the circumstances are changed and there would be no great danger in lending the vehicle during such times, as it was a trade vehicle. The whole point turns on what is the principal use for which the vehicle is kept, and the best authorities agree that if the vehicle is only occasionally used for the conveyance of pleasure parties and its principal use is that of trade, that no danger arises from the lending of same. In the alternative circumstances, certainly no.

QUESTION.—We have the offer of a useful committee room, which would actually be merely the entrance hall to a Co-operative Hall. There is, however, a door leading into the shop, and we would be glad to know if this interferes with the legality of using these premises?

ANSWER.—No, assuming that the shop is not used for the consumption of refreshments on the premises, or that it does not hold an excise license, there is no enactment which should prevent the use of the place suggested.

QUESTION.—We have cases of men being on Local Government (O) for land or premises; they live outside the constituency, but their wives are on in virtue of these qualifications for

a Parliamentary vote. Is this correct?

Are the men not also entitled to come on for business premises? If that is not the case, then ought not the wives to be taken off for Parliamentary?

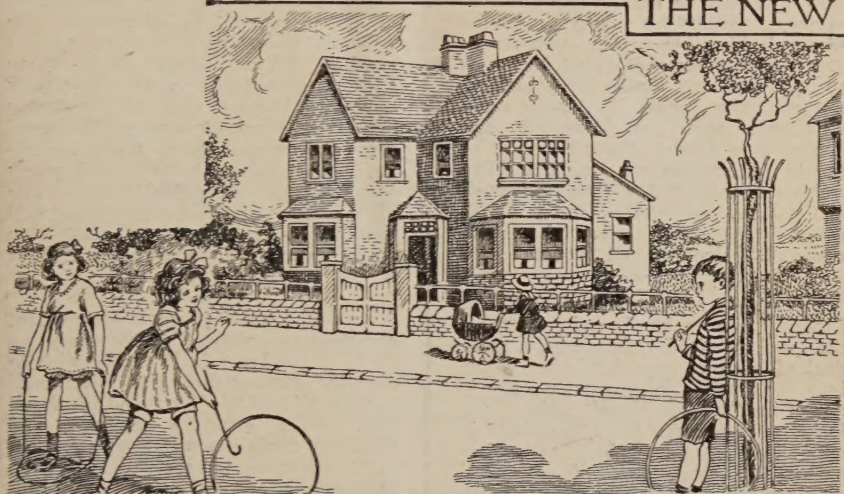
ANSWER.—The explanation of the register entries will probably be found in a curious anomaly of the 1918 Act, which gave a woman the Parliamentary vote if entitled to be registered as a Local Government elector by virtue of occupying "land or premises (not being a dwelling house) of a yearly value of not less than £5, or is the wife of a husband entitled to be so registered." Another Section of the Act gives the husband the Parliamentary vote in respect of business qualification only if he occupies land or premises of £10 value. Thus for premises between £5 and £10 value the wife may be registered for a Parliamentary vote, but not the husband.

QUESTION.—Is it in order prior to election to arrange a loan with any person or persons for the specific purpose of paying the Returning Officer's fee of £150, which would be returned if we polled as last election?

ANSWER.—There is nothing whatever to prevent either a candidate or some other person incurring the obligation of a loan for the purpose either of paying the deposit or of paying other election expenses. The incurring by the candidate of a debt for the purpose of the payment of his expenses is not on the same footing as the incurring of a debt, say for printing and stationery. Election expenses consist of monies paid, and, therefore, the raising of a loan is certainly not to be included as an election expense. On the other hand, the return of election expenses should always show the sources from whence the election agent has derived his funds. This is often conveniently got over by entering "Received from candidate £——" though this is really not sufficient, and the actual sources of income should be entered. If the candidate has received a personal loan the agent would not of course enter this, and the transaction would have nothing to do with the election accounts. But if some third party had incurred a loan and given the proceeds to the agent, it is contented that the money itself should be shown as received from the third party.

ELECTION ADDRESS FRONTISPIECE

LABOUR'S POLICY :: RING IN
THE NEW



THE OPPOSITION'S POLICY :: THE OLD

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One size only.

Made for a foolscap quarto.

SOME NEWSPAPER MEMS.

There are few new issues to announce this month, other, of course, than the special by-election sheets which are now a feature of the Party's electioneering. With the approach of the General Election a large number of Local Parties are sharpening their wits to find ways and means for possessing a local Press "organ." Among these we note that the Warwick and Leamington Labour Party have got so far as to christen the embryo "The Labour Searchlight" ("Labour News" series), and are well advanced with other arrangements. To other newcomers—Welcome! and Success!

Several copies of the "Bath Pioneer" are to hand, and judged by the quantity of advertisements, a good deal of business capacity is being put into the paper. This new weekly is one of the "Labour News" series. The local pages are well filled, and there is every sign of permanency and prosperity. At any rate, we will wish both as a reward for the enterprise of the Bath Labour Party and its energetic agent, Mr. J. J. Pendry.

The Leeds (weekly) "Citizen" is one among the "Labour News" series, which succeeds in perfectly disguising its standardised basis—a matter on which we have heard exaggerations from people who magnify difficulties, or create them. The six page issue makes an effective and sufficient journal, of varied contents and wide appeal, and frankly, we like it. A serial story, by Allen Upward, is a new feature, and one that helps to make the "Citizen" a home paper. There is a full page of "adverts," and with this asset afforded them by the energetic people in charge of the paper, the Leeds movement ought to be able to put enough backbone into the sales, to make their paper a first-rate paying proposition. At three-halfpence it is average value—but oh, for the penny, and the power in the increased sales, that would justify the reduction.

A special word of commendation was due for the eight page Christmas number of the "Bermondsey Labour News." It was all business, 'tis true, but the story (or is it romance?) of the

building of the Bermondsey movement, and its ramifications, the bakery, and business successes, or of the bold challenge to both Parties, all make reading of live interest, made more so by effective illustration and photograph. In Bermondsey, as elsewhere, the Liberals and Tories coalesce against Labour. (What blind fools these Liberals must think we are when their unctuous journals feel for Labour's hand!) Yet Labour musters 28 council members—whose photos make a striking picture gallery in their own paper—against 34 of the Coalition. The high Labour electorate here indicated should justify efforts to sustain a weekly, and we hope the present paper is just a John the Baptist.

Several Labour journals are making excellent use of the Parliamentary records of the local M.P.'s they wish to dismiss. Among these the "Bermondsey News" and the "East End Pioneer" both make effective attacks. The Coalition ranks are vulnerable enough in this direction to receive a broadside in almost any constituency they hold, and altogether the task is both easier and more useful than re-echoing the silly and often lying criticisms of Labour M.P.'s set afloat and insidiously spread mostly by Liberal journals. This is a paragraph the moral of which is intended for further consumption than those interested in a paper of the Party.

The "Birmingham District Commonwealth," No 1 of which was a issue of 20,000 copies, is the new monthly of the Birmingham and District Co-operative Party, two of whose candidates are contesting Birmingham seats. The "Commonwealth" is of the Labour News Series, and the local pages are well written. Hard work and real business is the tone of the journal, as it is the tone of the organisation in the two constituencies above referred to. We heartily wish the paper success, and believe it will prove a powerful factor in the hour of contest.

"The Worker," of Letchworth (of the National Labour Press (Leicester) "Audacity" series), is a well-written monthly of 10 pages. There is a distinct literary flavour, and "Books and Bookmen," "Music and Drama," are features. Humour of a fine and un-

Reg.
No.

P.D.

Has
VOTED

Name _____

Address _____

T.U.

| Co-op.

| Soc.

| Memb.

AGAINST**FOR****DOUBTFUL****WILL vote at 8—1****| 1—5****| 5—8****WON'T vote** _____ [_____]Send Vehicle? ☒ _____ (_____)*Removed to :—*

A GENERAL ELECTION NEXT WEEK

would find many Labour Agents at a loss to know which of the many Canvass Cards to adopt for their contest. The Card illustrated above is our latest effort to make Electioneering easy for the Labour Agent and all concerned. Read this testimonial :—

National Labour Press, Ltd.,
Fleet Street, E.C.

DEAR SIRs,

The Canvass Card you have printed for me should satisfy the most exacting Agent; the type has been carefully chosen; the spacing is adequate. In use, the card, by its flexibility and smooth, hard surface, is easy to handle in the Committee Room, and is legible after the rough usage of the Canvass. The price is right for Parties with short purses.

Yours faithfully,

Labour Hall,
East Ham,
November 2nd, 1921.

W. STEWART RAINBIRD,
Labour Party Agent,
North-East Ham.

The **NATIONAL LABOUR PRESS, Ltd.**

30 Blackfriars Street, Manchester.
8/9 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, E.C.
17/23 Albion Street, Leicester.

common order is provided in the story of "How Sir Gadabout Came to the Garden City"—an elegant yarn of chivalry that is so real that one's very smiles are subdued by incident, until at the finish, eagerly reached, one realises the pleasantness and humours of the passage. "The Worker" is by no means "above" the worker, but it follows out its motive to serve all workers "by hand or by brain." We note modern setting to several of the advertisements, but would suggest that if the copies could be guillotined at the top, access to the magazine pages would be easier, and the general reader more attracted thereby.

MORE BAZAARS

RUGBY NETTS £120.

We are grateful to Mr. H. Tarbox, the Rugby agent, for the following note upon the recent successful bazaar conducted by the Local Party:—

"Like most local Parties without a financial Trade Union candidate, the Executive of the Rugby Labour Party found themselves at the end of 1920 with more liabilities than assets. The Women's Section, which has gone very well from its inception, decided to make an effort to raise money, and in February a Bazaar Committee came into being, and working parties were set up. Loans tendered as working capital were refused, and by one means or another the women found the necessary money themselves. February 1922 was expected to see the fruition of their efforts, but the local industrial situation necessitated that it should mature before things got worse, and so December 14th, the 'appointed day,' saw a gaily decked Co-operative Hall, with well stocked stalls, and a number of competitions, etc., designed to extract the loose coppers from the pockets of those attending. A wet day somewhat spoiled the attendance, but thanks to the sale of tickets (nearly £40), business was satisfactory, and the nett proceeds were just upon £120, a very fine tribute to the ladies responsible, not one of whom had any previous experience of Bazaar Work.

"A note or two by an interested observer may be helpful to others who are hesitating to take the risk of venturing upon a bazaar. The first business is to get the women interested,

and to see that, whilst the good plain sewer should have plenty of material provided, those with a bent for fancy work are encouraged to the fullest extent. Finished articles produced for general inspection at an early meeting, tempt others who have made no effort to try to go one better. Every member and suspected sympathiser should be "touched" for help in some form. The provision of music and refreshments in the hall are absolute essentials. It is a day's work to properly fit up a hall, and a two-days' bazaar is better worth while than a one-day affair. Two attendants are necessary for each stall, and there should also be a reserve of attendants so that relief is at hand to free any lady for half an hour when her little bunch of acquaintances come upon the scene. It may seem queer to charge folk for coming to buy something, but having bought a ticket many come who otherwise wouldn't, and if the tickets entitle the holders to participate in a prize distribution, half-a-dozen good ticket sellers can ensure the success of the venture before the doors open. Insurance agents make good ticket sellers, as a rule. Ten months is not too long in advance to get going, unless you have workers ad lib.!!

We are also pleased to note that the Heanor (Derbyshire) and District Labour Party are to hold a Labour Fair on February 4th. The programme is particularly attractive and the Men's and Women's Sections both contribute several stalls. We hope to report on this event next month.

THE PRINCIPLES OF PARTY ORGANISATION

We regret that circumstances over which we have no control have compelled the holding over this month of the Editor's instalment of above article.

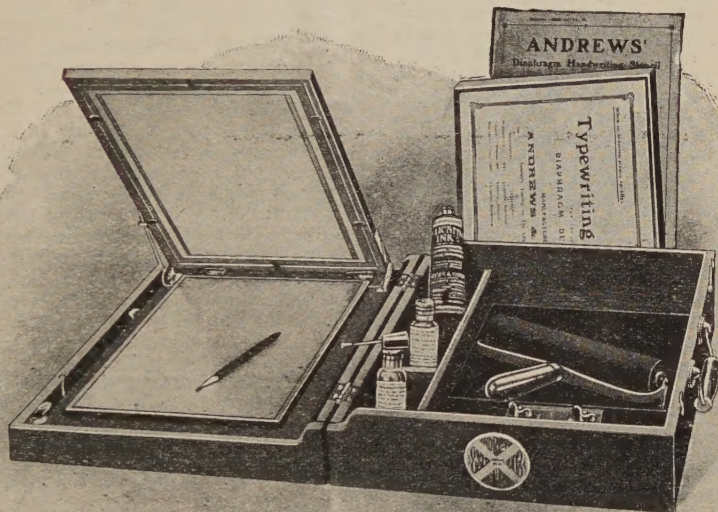
We are pleased to note that Mrs. Fawcett, the National Women's Organiser for the Midlands Area, has now returned to her duties recuperated after her illness. All communications or requests for services should be addressed to Mrs. Fawcett, 102, Morley Road, Washwood Heath, Birmingham.

ANDREWS' DIAPHRAGM DUPLICATORS

Reproduces, in facsimile handwriting or typewriting, your notices at a very reasonable cost. It has all the efficiency of more expensive duplicators. Copies are uniform throughout and the number is unlimited. Willingly sent carriage and packing free on approval.

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Testimonials from several Labour Party Agents



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EXTRA HOURS OF POLLING

A correspondent writes asking if we would elaborate a sentence in a recent issue of the "Labour Organiser," in which we referred to the desirability of carefully considering whether or not an application for extended hours of Polling should be made in any particular instance. It seems true that some of our friends are under the impression, that it is up to Labour every time to secure the longest possible hours of polling, and this view we contest, and believe that every application for extended hours should be carefully weighed both with a view to the justice of the application and its effect upon our candidates' prospects. It is by no means a part of the policy of the Party which stands for shorter hours, both in factory life and shop life to lightly make an application which involves 14 hours work for other workers, and it by no means follows as an axiom either that the longest possible time during which the poll can be opened is necessarily the best way to give voters the opportunity to vote. Indeed, the only way in which many people can vote at all, however long the poll was open, would be to extend to them the postal facilities now enjoyed by University voters. The laziness and dilatoriness of the average voter is, in our opinion, no justification for extended hours, any more than it has been accepted as a justification for keeping shops open to 11 and 12 o'clock on a Saturday night, so that customers could spend the busy hours of the evening in congenial drinking dens. In our opinion, to make a general practice of applying for extended hours is the wrong policy, and each application ought to be decided upon its merits.

It is obvious that a week-day Poll would in most constituencies afford a greater justification for an application than a Saturday Poll. One can, however, easily imagine circumstances in which a Saturday Poll ought to be extended, by way of convenience to a large section of the electors. Thus the holding of a big football match attracting several thousand people to a neighbouring town, many of whom would not return till early or late evening, would provide justification; so, too, would the fact that a works opened at 8 o'clock in the morn-

ing and closed at a late hour in the evening provide justification for a 7 a.m. opening of the Poll. These and similar circumstances are the conditions which we think ought to arise to justify any extension. The matter of expediency from the Party standpoint is one too, which has to be considered. Assume a constituency one area of which was of the middle class dormitory type to which city men returned from 6 to 8 p.m., while another area was largely working class, whose arrival home was nearer 5 p.m. It would surely be in this case more greatly to the interest of our opponents to demand the extension. Or we might instance an extreme case where such an application would be distinctly disadvantageous to Labour. Thus one constituency only in a group of constituencies where contests are taking place might make an application for an extension of the Poll. The inevitable effect of this might easily be the flooding of that constituency soon after 8 p.m., with vehicles from other places where the Poll had closed—quite sufficient one might imagine to entirely turn the course of the election. This aspect of the question ought to be very carefully weighed by election agents, and consultation should take place with surrounding constituencies.

"THE WOMAN'S CAUSE IS MAN'S"

Do you happen to know of a local Labour Party Executive, composed entirely of men, quite at a loss as to how to influence the woman voter for the next local or General Election?

Have you ever dared to ask those men "where their own women-folk happened to be"?

Have you ever canvassed wives of Trade Union and Labour men in order to get them to join a women's section or local Labour Party?

If so, you may have found that some Trades Unionist and Labour men do not enlighten their wives as to the reason it is necessary for them to be out night after night doing their bit for the Great Cause, with the result that their women-folk have a grudge against the Labour Party instead of understanding and regarding it as a friend to be proud of because of its work for the home and child-life.

It is even reported of one Labour

Labour Agents, Get ready to address your

ENVELOPES

from the Autumn Register—the
Register on which will possibly be
∴ fought the next General ∴

Parliamentary Election

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has placed with makers an order for

1,000,000 ENVELOPES

made to size to meet postal require-
ments for election free delivery.
The Envelope will take a quarto
∴ Election Address 4 fold ∴

SPECIAL ENVELOPE
for LABOUR AGENTS

SPECIAL PRICE
to LABOUR AGENTS

Send a post card for particulars to-day to

The PIONEER PRESS Ltd.
3 New Road, Woolwich, S.E. 18

man that he refuses to discuss politics at home, and even resents his wife asking questions about meetings or speakers! Let us hope he is an exception.

Another case, known personally, is a Trade Union official who confesses his inability to explain his work or political views to his own wife, and even appeals to members of a Women's Section to call on her in his absence and explain Labour politics. All this means that secretaries cannot afford to ignore wives of their own members when arranging a canvass of women.

One of the finest things that a Women's Section can do at this stage is to organise a canvass of wives of Trade Unionists (a list of whom could be obtained from the agent or secretary), and leave invitations to all meetings of the Women's Section and general meetings of the Party. It is so easy to put our case to the wife of a Trade Unionist or Labour man now, and many good women are waiting just for that invitation.

It is also essential that the time and place of the women's meetings should be announced regularly at all meetings of the Party. Very often this is not done, though one Borough Party secretary has adopted the excellent plan of typing at the bottom of the agenda supplied to each delegate at the fortnightly meeting a reminder of time and place of the Women's Section meeting, thus reminding the men and the women present that such meetings are really held.

It is important, too, that secretaries of Women's Sections should have announced at women's meetings all ward or polling district meetings, so that the women members may attend these very important meetings. To the good secretaries who read "The Labour Organiser" the above suggestion will not be necessary, as they will have a complete list of women members of every ward and polling district, and these will *always* be invited to such meetings.

But, alas! one does know good, keen, women who somehow never get invited to ward meetings, it being understood that they belong to the *Women's Section only*. Surely the formation of Women's Sections is to prepare women for the larger movement, and not to keep them from it! "S'uff Sed."

ELECTION LAW FOR COUNTY COUNCILS, BOARDS OF GUARDIANS, URBAN & RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILS

By GEORGE HORWILL, B.Sc. (Econ.)

I—ELECTION LAW APPLICABLE TO ALL LOCAL ELECTIONS:—MUNICIPAL, COUNTY COUNCIL, URBAN DISTRICT, BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES.

(a) **BRIBERY.** Promising, giving, or lending money or goods for purpose of securing votes, whether before, during, or after an election, is illegal.

Employing voters in an election for payment, with the object of influencing their votes, is illegal. The number of persons who can be employed for payment in an election is strictly limited.

It is not illegal for an employer to allow his workmen time off to vote and pay them for it providing he does it generally and not in the interests of a particular candidate.

(b) **TREATING.** The giving of refreshments, whether food or drink, with the object of influencing votes is illegal.

(c) **UNDUE INFLUENCE.** The use of threats with intent to frighten voters, or threats to procure their dismissal from work, or the use of open force, or threats to inflict spiritual penalties (e.g., by priests) or injuries, with the object of influencing their votes is illegal.

(d) **ILLEGAL PAYMENTS.** (1) Payments made, directly or indirectly, for any conveyance to bring electors to the poll is illegal.

(2) Payments made, directly or indirectly, to an elector for the exhibition of a bill or address in his window or elsewhere is illegal. This does not apply to a contract made bona fide with a professional bill poster.

(3) Payments made for committee-rooms or agents in excess of the number required by law is illegal.

(4) Payments made for bands, torches, flags, banners, ribbons or other marks of distinction, are illegal.

NOTE.—In those cases persons may lend conveyances, or wear ribbons, or display bills and addresses for candidates, provided no payment for so doing is directly or indirectly made.

(e) **USING CERTAIN PREMISES.** The use of premises, either for committee-rooms or for other purpose connected with a candidate's election, on which

refreshments of any kind is ordinarily sold, is illegal. (This includes rooms connected with, e.g., restaurants). The use of premises licensed for the sale of intoxicants is illegal.

NOTE.—The use of rooms which are merely adjacent to licensed premises, restaurants, refreshments, shops, etc., even though owned by the same landlord, may be used, providing they are not ordinarily used by persons using such licensed, etc., rooms and there is a separate entrance providing access.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF POLLING AGENTS.

(a) **DUTIES.** A polling agent has a right to attend inside the polling booth.

(b) **PERSONATION.** A person is guilty of personation who applies for a ballot paper in the name of some other person.

The presiding officer must order the arrest of any person whom a polling agent accuses of personation if the polling agent undertakes to prove his statement, but the vote of such person cannot be rejected if he persists in voting. The polling agent is liable for damages if he accuses falsely.

(c) **ILLITERATE AND BLIND VOTERS.** Illiterate and blind voters must make a declaration of the incapacity to the presiding officer, and such officer must place the cross on the ballot paper *in the presence of the agent* according as the voter directs, and put it in the ballot box.

(d) **TENDERED BALLOT PAPERS.** When a voter finds that another has voted in his place he can ask for a "tendered" ballot paper, which he can fill up. A tendered ballot paper is not put in the ballot box, but kept separately by the presiding officer.

(e) **INSPECTION OF BALLOT BOX.** Polling agents should be at their respective stations just before the commencement of the poll, when the presiding officer is bound to show them the inside of the ballot boxes to prove that the boxes are empty before he locks and seals them.

(f) **SECRECY.** Polling agents and all others engaged in the booth must aid in maintaining the secrecy of the vote. They must not interfere with a voter while he is making his vote, or attempt to obtain information as to how he has voted, or communicate with anybody respecting it. Agents contravening the law respecting the secrecy of the vote are liable on conviction to six months' imprisonment.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF COUNTING AGENTS.

(a) **DUTIES.** Agents appointed to witness the counting of votes should carefully watch the clerks who do the counting and draw their attention to any errors they make. The returning officer is bound to conduct the counting according to law.

(b) **PAYMENT.** Agents appointed to witness the counting of votes cannot be paid.

(c) **SECRECY.** Counting agents must have made a declaration of secrecy. They must not attempt to communicate with people outside as to what is taking place in the counting room. They must not attempt to ascertain the numbers on the back of any of the ballot papers.

(d) **BALLOT BOXES.** Ballot Boxes are to be opened in the presence of the agents. The presiding officer must count the number of ballot papers, mix the papers from the various boxes, then order the count. "Tendered" ballot papers must not be counted.

(e) **SPOILT PAPERS.** (1) Any ballot paper is spoiled if it has not the official mark on the back, but it is not spoiled merely because it has not the official mark on the face.

(2) An unmarked ballot paper is void.

(3) If initials or name is written on the ballot paper it is spoiled even though there is a cross opposite the name of one of the candidates.

(4) If nothing else is written on the paper except the cross, but the cross is not written in the correct space, then the paper will hold good, provided that it is quite clear for whom the voter intended to vote.

(5) If there are two crosses put in the same space for the same candidate the vote holds good.

(6) If there are marks on the ballot paper other than the cross the paper may still hold good, providing the marks be not initials or writing and do not obscure the intention of the voter.

(7) If a mark is put instead of a cross the paper may still hold good if no other marks are made and the intention of the voter is clear.

(f) **CONCLUSION OF COUNT.** The returning officer must verify the ballot paper accounts with the total number of ballot papers counted at the beginning.

(g) **CASTING VOTE.** In the event of a tie between two candidates the returning officer has a casting vote.

II.—ELECTION LAW FOR COUNTY COUNCILS.

DATE OF ELECTIONS.

(a) **County Councils** usually retire every third year.

(b) The ordinary day of election must be such day between March 1st and March 8th as may be fixed by the County Council. If no day is fixed within six weeks of March 8th then the date must be March 8th.

NOMINATION.

(a) **NOMINATION PAPERS.** Every candidate must be nominated in writing by (1) a proposer; (2) a seconder; and (3) eight other burgesses in the electoral division.

No person must subscribe to a nomination in or for more than one ward (i.e., electoral division), or for more candidates than there are vacancies.

The signature on the nomination papers must correspond to the names of these persons on the Burgess roll, and in case a name is spelt wrongly on the Burgess roll it is advisable for the signatory to sign his name as it is spelt on the Burgess roll.

(b) **DELIVERY OF NOMINATION PAPERS.** Each nomination paper must be delivered either (1) personally by the candidate, or (2) by his proposer or seconder (but not by an agent), at a place fixed by the returning officer seven days before the day of the election, before 5 p.m.

(c) **WITHDRAWALS.** A candidate can withdraw after nomination not later than 2 p.m. on the day following the last day for the delivery of nomination papers.

(d) **OBJECTIONS.** Between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. on the day for withdrawals the returning officer must attend the place fixed to hear any objections (which must be made in writing) to the nominations.

The candidate may appoint a representative to attend the proceedings for objections. This appointment must be made and delivered to the place fixed by the returning officer by 5 p.m. on the last day for the delivery of nominations.

Only the candidate and his representative may attend the proceedings.

Matters concerning the qualifications of candidates cannot be decided at these proceedings.

APPOINTMENT OF AGENTS.

(a) **FOR PAYMENT.** One polling agent for each polling station and one clerk or messenger for every thousand voters, with the right to a minimum of two clerks or messengers, may be appointed by the candidate for payment.

(b) **WITHOUT PAYMENT.** Agents to witness the counting of votes and an unlimited number for various other purposes may be appointed by the candidate without payment.

(c) **WHEN TO APPOINT.** The names and addresses of polling and counting agents must be transmitted to the returning officer at least one clear day before the opening of the poll.

EXPENSES OF ELECTION.

(a) **AMOUNT ALLOWED.** The maximum expenditure allowed is £25 where the number of voters does not exceed 500. Where this number is exceeded an additional twopence for each voter in excess of 500 is allowed. In joint candidatures the amount of each is reduced one-fourth.

(b) **COMMITTEE ROOMS.** One committee room may be hired for every 2,000 voters or part thereof.

(c) **AGENTS PAID.** See heading "Appointment of Agents."

(d) **ACCOUNTS.** (1) Tradesmen, etc., must send in bills to the candidate for expenses incurred within 14 days after the election, and these must be paid within 21 days.

(2) Every agent employed must send in writing to the candidate a list of expenses incurred within 23 days.

(3) The candidate must send in a complete list of his election expenses to the Town Clerk within 28 days of the election. All bills and receipts for sums of 20/- must accompany the statement. A declaration in the form of the Fourth Schedule to the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, 1884, must also accompany the statement.

III.—ELECTION LAW FOR URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL, RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL, AND BOARD OF GUARDIANS ELECTIONS.

DATE OF ELECTIONS.

(a) Elections for Board of Guardians and Urban or Rural District Councils are usually fixed to take place on the first Monday in April, or if that should be Easter Monday, then the last Monday in March.

NOMINATION.

(a) **NOMINATION PAPERS.** The nomination paper must contain the candidate's name in full, his, or her, place of abode, and description (i.e., trade or profession).

Every candidate must be nominated in writing by (1) a proposer; (2) a seconder. *This is sufficient*, as the names of eight other burgesses are not required as is the case in a County Council or Municipal Election.

(b) **DELIVERY OF NOMINATION PAPERS.** Each nomination must be sent in to the returning officer not later than noon on the Thursday following the day on which notice of election was given.

(c) **WITHDRAWALS.** Any candidate may withdraw not later than noon on the second Tuesday following the day on which notice of election was given.

(d) **VALIDITY OF NOMINATION PAPER.** The returning officer decides the validity of the nomination paper and his decision is final. He cannot, however, decide the qualifications of the candidate, only the nomination paper. There is no provision for objections as is the case in Municipal and County Council elections.

APPOINTMENT OF AGENTS.

(a) **COUNTING AGENTS.** Each candidate has a right of appointing one. More are usually appointed, but it is not legally enforceable except in certain cases, e.g., Metropolitan Borough Council elections.

The appointment of a counting agent must be transmitted to the returning officer one clear day at least before the opening of the poll.

(b) **POLLING AGENTS.** If there are only two candidates, each candidate has a right to appoint one agent for each polling station. If the number of candidates exceeds two, then any number of the candidates, but not less than one-third, may agree together to appoint one agent for each polling station, and no more can be appointed. The appointment of a polling agent must be delivered to the returning officer at least two clear days before the opening of the poll. A polling agent may be paid.

(c) **VARIOUS.** An unlimited number of agents for various purposes may be appointed.

EXPENSES OF ELECTION.

The Local Government Act, 1894, excludes expenses in the above elections from the limits imposed on other local elections by the Municipal Elections Act, 1884.

(a) There is no limit to the expenses incurred by the candidate.

(b) There is no time limit within which election accounts must be paid.

(c) No return of election expenses has to be made to the returning officer, or other person, by the candidate.

This, it will be seen, is very different from what is required in County Council and ordinary Borough elections.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Special Election Edition

Our next issue will, in co-operation with the Labour Party, be brought out as the first of two special General Election Editions. The March number will consist solely of articles and data bearing on the immediate preparation for an election, and will provide the most complete and authoritative guide and handbook for Labour Party officials and workers ever issued.

You are earnestly pressed, in the interests of your own campaign, to double your order next month, and to place the order at once.

The "Labour Organiser" next month, at 4d. per copy, is the cheapest Election Guide ever issued by any Party. Extra size. No increase in Price.

OUR AGENTS AT HOME

MR. T. LANGLEY, OF NUNEATON.

"Punch's" historic advice to those about to be married is—don't! I have often wondered why, though I suppose Mr. Punch had had some, and knew. I will make another don't, and would say to those who would visit Nuneaton by road—don't! For I have had some. And I know! In the last 12 months I have done over twelve thousand miles by road, and in all this journeying I have yet to discover worse roads than those of Warwickshire, and those round Nuneaton in particular. Nuneaton is a mining town and its environs have all that sordidness characteristic of the areas where the mineowners' slaves win profits for the owners, and fortunes for the factors. Pit banks and belching chimneys, or the wretched hovels in which free-born Britons live in our industrial areas, never draw me willingly, and when to these horrors are added roads that are quagmires, and lanes that resemble quarry-floors, then there is even less to attract. I never visit a mining area (and Nuneaton is typical) without wondering in what age Mrs. Hemans lived or where were the cottage homes of the sort she sang of. They are not in the Warwickshire mining area, and my gorge rises at the apathy of civilisation and the inhumanity of man to man whenever evil fortune takes me to such places.

After this you will wonder that I say I always have a pleasure in store when I get to Nuneaton.

My first visit to Nuneaton was to behold a somewhat ancient building with groggy floors, and bare brick walls, which was, I was told, to be converted into a Labour Club. I stepped gingerly over the broken boards and wondered at the enthusiasm of Tom Langley. The next time I visited Nuneaton I had forgotten the situation of the to-be Labour Club, and, walking along with Langley, I called a halt a moment outside an attractive bookshop, whose goodly display simply shouted for close attention. To my amaze he pointed to the other window, whereon I discovered the names lettered of the Labour Party and its affiliated bodies. The bookshop, then, was an appanage of the new club. The style of it was ultra modern and on a footing, though, of

course, smaller, with the best bookshops owned by multiple firms. Alas! the mining troubles and industrial depression have temporarily closed the bookshop, but the other things remain—and will do for the next paragraph.

Tom Langley told me all about the club at the time, and I know from other sources how much was due to his energy, his business ability and keen perception, in the transformation that had taken place. The Nuneaton Labour Club is on the small side, but it has a fine meeting room, good social accommodation, and a luxuriously furnished and roomy lounge for members and members' wives. On the front is the bookshop I have spoken of, and Langley's offices.

I have now come to that which to me has always been an oasis in the desert, and some compensation for the bumps of broken roads and the presence of pit banks. I have been in the office many times, and on every occasion it has been a model of cleanliness, orderliness, and efficiency. And I am hard to please. Tom Langley himself was a miner born and bred; he had not those advantages of higher education or of clerical insight that many men possess, but, like some other agents drawn from the same source, he has surmounted both physical and personal disabilities in the earnest pursuit of a Cause. He has sought throughout for the best in his work, and I think he has largely attained it.

In the office there is every evidence of sufficiency in the surroundings—a good roll-top desk, a worktable, filing drawers and boxes, typewriter, duplicator, maps, and other things, and withal a cosiness and handiness of access that makes for rapid working. I have at different times in the "Labour Organiser" commended certain things from Nuneaton. This month it is the businesslike grip on the individual membership problem, another time it was the efficient registration preparations; and to-day I want to mention the excellent system of record-keeping that Langley possesses.

The Nuneaton Division is well-organised, and that, too, not on paper but in the polling districts and the mining villages that make up the constituency. But however good the membership may be in the localities of a constituency, a co-ordinating hand is needed, and a central direction and

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knowledge is necessary so that the forces may be applied by which every link in the chain contributes to the strength of the chain that is so much greater than that of the individual unit. At Nuneaton I have seen the records of the whole division. Each area, polling district, or ward, as the case may be, has recorded in respect of it, and principally from answers supplied by the local officers themselves, the following facts and information:—Names and addresses of committee; probable votes (Labour, Liberal, and Tory), with the date of canvass; names and addresses of Trades Union secretaries within the ward and of their Union, with the number of members; halls and schools available for public meetings, with seating accommodation, charges for hire, and name and address of person to whom application should be made; a list of Labour representatives within the ward, naming the bodies on which they serve; suitable chairmen and speakers, with names and addresses and classification. The form also bears a column for remarks and the number of voters on the register. So far as the above information is capable of totalling or analysis, the information is carried from time to time to what is termed an organising list, and thus at a glance one sees on one large sheet the position throughout the whole area. The organising sheet also shows the number of individual members and one or two other details apparently not on the local sheet previously referred to. I believe it to be of sound practical value that agents should so summarise their forces from time to time and, indeed, make comparisons with lists previously obtained. I could illustrate other systems and business methods adopted at the Nuneaton office, but above will suffice as an example.

Mr. J. Stevenson is the candidate of the Warwickshire miners for the Nuneaton seat, and he, too, comes from the ranks and speaks as the people speak, and is shaping well for victory when the election comes along. The Warwickshire miners are well led, and Mr. Johnson, the General Secretary, is a great strength to the candidature of Mr. Stevenson and the interests of the Party locally.

Lest I have been too harsh on the surroundings of Nuneaton, let me wind up this article with an explanation.

On the last occasion I visited Nuneaton it was after doing 22 miles in pouring rain en route from Leicester and carrying Langley in the side-car. *He* was protected by hood and screen and comfy overcoat. I defied the elements. The rain got through my helmet and down my back. It penetrated other things which even editors wear and finally reached my boots. Add to this the glorious roads, the splashing mud, and the blinding storm, and my miseries were complete. Yet, on opening the dovecot, Langley, warm and dry, *smiled*—whereat and wherefore I emphatically protested. But in this article I have had mine own back. A cat can look at a king, but no rascal may lightly laugh at the dripping mud and wet shirt on the back of

THE EDITOR.

YARNS THAT ARE SPUN

1.—THE BLANKETS.

A whirlwind had descended on the quiet little town of W—. A strenuous by-election was in progress, and from north, south, east, and west, three Parties had mustered their array. The wordy and windy battle raged both day and night, and in the erstwhile sleepy cockpit the inhabitants suddenly woke to the possibilities of the situation in the way of profit to themselves.

Hotel accommodation was unobtainable, and the chiefs of the three Parties instituted regular canvasses for the purpose of finding lodgings for their forces. Prices rose, till at last private houses charged as much as first-rate hotels, and rival electioneers slept in the same beds, ate from the same table, and received each the same promise from the landlady of her valuable vote. Spare beds and blankets rose to a premium, and rumour had it that the town had been ransacked by scrambling landladies for all the spare bedclothes they could either beg or borrow.

It was at this time that two fresh arrivals found themselves taking up the quarters of two others who had left the central scene of battle for more distant fields. The landlady apparently improved the occasion to reduce the bedclothes for the purpose of making up another bed and "taking in" a third lodger.

The first night our two friends

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(whom for convenience we will know as Mutt and Jeff) retired to bed, a hard frost had thinned the air and likewise the bedclothes, possibly also the blood of the redoubtable pair, for neither slept, and throughout the long hours they lay and shivered, varying the monotony only by calling imprecations on the head of chief election agents and January elections.

Towards 5 a.m., dire extremity forced Jeff to suggest that they may as well try and squeeze into one bed for the sake of mutual warmth. Mutt and Jeff were late for breakfast that morning.

The next night separate beds were again occupied, but at 1 a.m. the swap over was made. Mutt and Jeff were again late at breakfast.

The third night a brilliant idea occurred to Jeff. Why occupy the second bed at all? Thereupon all the bedclothes were transferred to the one bed. Mutt and Jeff were later still to breakfast the next morning. Ere, however, they came down they held a council of war. The second bed had not been slept in and the dread thought occurred to Mutt that if the landlady noticed they were sleeping together

the blanket ration would be further reduced. The council decided to replace the bedclothes and "tumble" the unused bed. This was done so effectively that even the landlady's heart was moved, for, imagining the sleeper had been kicking about with the cold, an extra wrap found its way to the bed next night. Mutt and Jeff were now in high glee. The good news was imparted to a few confidential friends, and that there is honour amongst us is proved by the fact that nobody split.

For three weeks Mutt and Jeff slept together. For three weeks they religiously made the bed afresh every night and "tumbled" the spare bed again the next morning. For three weeks they were late to breakfast. And for three weeks they were the wonder and envy of all who knew the story and who shivered at night in cold beds with scanty bedclothes.

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WEST MIDLAND LABOUR AGENTS

A HAPPY GATHERING.

The annual dinner of the West Midland district of the National Association of Labour Registration and Election Agents, held at the Waterloo Hotel, Smethwick, on the 19th inst., was a very happy affair. Councillor C. C. Jones presided, and among the principal guests were F. O. Roberts, M.P., J. E. Davison, M.P., the Mayor of Smethwick (Alderman A. M. Willets), the Mayor of Derby (Councillor J. R. Raynes), R. Dennison, J.P., Frank Smith, W. J. Chamberlain (Editor of the "Town Crier"), and the chairman and executive of the Association.

The dinner over, Frank Smith, in a humorous speech, commenced the toast list by proposing "The National Association of Labour Registration and Election Agents." Sam Hague, J.P. (chairman of the Association), then presented H. Drinkwater (general secretary) with a cheque from members of the Association as a mark of their appreciation of Mr. Drinkwater's invaluable services. Mr. Drinkwater suitably replied, and referred to the growth of the Association during the past few years.

Mr. J. H. Edwards proposed "The Employing Associations," which was responded to by Mr. R. Dennison, J.P.

Mr. Sam Hague proposed "The Labour Party." Mr. F. O. Roberts, M.P., responding, said Labour was still being told that it was "not fit to govern"; but he had no hesitation in declaring that the 70 Labour members in the House of Commons were superior in intelligence and debating power to any 70 M.P.'s. representing the other parties in the House. Unless something was done to remedy the positively inhuman conditions resulting from the present social and economic system, civilisation was in danger of annihilation, and the only remedy before the country to-day was contained in the policy of the Labour Party.

Responding to the toast of "The Parliamentary Labour Party," Mr. J. E. Davison, M.P., said the only deficiency the Parliamentary Labour Party suffered from was that disclosed

in the divisional lobbies, when the Labour members were outvoted by those who represented the interests of organised capital. An addition of 100 per cent. to the present Labour representation in the Parliament would enable the Labour Party to hold the balance of power.

"Our Guests," proposed by Mr. Dan Davis, and responded to by the Mayor of Smethwick, brought the toast list to a close. Madame Hemming and Messrs. F. Adams and B. Guest contributed several excellent vocal selections during the evening, and Mr. F. O. Roberts, M.P., delighted the company with a couple of violin solos. —[Extracted from "The Town Crier."]

For many years the I.L.P. Diary has been the indispensable book for Labour workers, organisers, and speakers. The 1922 diary contains a useful summary of the franchise qualifications and is, as usual, a valuable directory to the Labour movement, besides serving its purpose as milestones of the year's work. Personally, we like its cream-laid pages better than the rice paper of which so many standard diaries are made.

The Annual Conference of Labour Women will be held this year at the Town Hall, Leamington Spa, on May 9th and 10th. The Conference will be preceded by a special business conference of delegates of Women's Sections, which will be held on the morning of the 9th inst. We earnestly ask local Parties throughout the country to realise the importance of this conference, and to place the necessary facilities in the way of Women's Sections being adequately represented.

We would draw the special attention of our readers to the important announcement on our front page of the new edition of Sir Hugh Fraser's Representation of the People Acts, published at £2 2s. net by Messrs. Sweet and Maxwell, Ltd. This work occupies the pre-eminent place in registration reference books, and should be on every agent's bookshelf. The edition should be obtainable this month, and we hope to review same in our March issue.